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The same paper of March 29th says: The following is the reply to the petition of the deputation (which waited on G. R. McMin, Esq., on Thursday week last), re the tax on Pearl-shelling boats:

Government Resident's Office,  
Palmerston, 22nd March, 1884.

Gentlemen,—Referring to the resolution passed at a meeting of those interested in pearl-fishing, 19th inst., I am directed to inform you that the Acting Government Resident has received a telegram from the Hon. Minister for the Territory stating that the Government cannot consent to a suspension of the Pearl-Fishing Regulations.

The strongest proof that can be given of the success of the pearl-shell industry is the fact that by the *Messiah*, left last night on Wednesday last, Captain Miller shipped 1246 pairs of shell, and Captain Riddell 146 pairs, all obtained in a few days. The N. & A. Pearl Fishing Company have a good deal of shell on hand, but, as they intend shipping to London they are waiting for suitable cases, or the materials for making such, to arrive from Sydney. Shares in the Company are unsaleable, even at fancy prices. A significant fact in connection with the industry is that a number of our townsmen were passengers by the *Messiah* for Thursday Island, and there are well-founded rumours of three or four new local firms starting operations in the course of a few weeks.

#### MEETING OF THE LEGISLATIVE COUNCIL.

A meeting of the members of the Legislative Council was held this afternoon. Captain Thomson, Harbour Master, occupied the vacancy caused by the absence of the Colonial Secretary on leave.

Before proceeding to the business of the day, His Excellency said he had, provisionally, appointed to fill the vacancy caused by the absence of his hon. friend the Colonial Secretary the Harbour Master, as a mark of his sense of the long and honorable services which Mr. Thomson had rendered to the Colony. His Excellency was sure all the members of Council, official and non-official, would be glad to see among them during the four months' absence of the Colonial Secretary a gentleman of Captain Thomson's high position.

His Excellency thanked His Excellency for his appointment.

#### PURCHASE OF PORTER PRIZES.

His Excellency recommended the Council to vote a sum of \$12,000 to be devoted to purchasing 1200 pairs of shell in England and erecting them over the public walls of the colony.

The vote was referred to the Finance Committee.

#### NEW VOTES.

On the motion of the Acting Colonial Secretary (the Hon. P. Stewart) the Council approved of the following votes recommended by the Finance Committee:—New Water Police Station, revolve, \$10,000; repairs to the road to Cape D'Agu, Light House, \$2,500; for reclamation by the Crown of a strip of land near Causeway Bay, \$2,000.

#### THE STAMP ACT.

On the motion of the Attorney General, the Council went into Committee on the Stamp Act.

Some discussion ensued on clause 22. In this new bill it was sought to prevent any one proceeding against an offender without the consent of the Collector of Stamps; in the old bill the consent of the Attorney General was necessary.

The Chief Justice thought the right of consent should remain with the Attorney General.

The Colonial Treasurer said under the old arrangement, an immense amount of trouble and vexation had been caused by the Collector of Stamps. The Attorney General could only be approached through the Colonial Secretary and by the time it reached the Attorney General the matter was blocked. During the past year this arrangement had almost caused an entire suspension of the law in this respect.

The Attorney General denied that there had been an entire suspension of the law in the matter, and said that there were a great many fine points to be considered in cases of prosecution under the Stamp Act, which could only be dealt with by those acquainted with the law.

The Chief Justice's suggestion was adopted.

The Colonial Treasurer moved that an amendment should be made on the schedule on charges for bills of exchange. The amendment had been suggested at the meeting of the Chamber of Commerce; but it had been further altered. The suggestion of the Chamber was that 30 cents should be charged on every additional \$1,000, or part thereof, for consideration; his friends who represented the Chamber had decided to alter this to 50 cents for every additional \$5,000, or part thereof, above \$10,000.

The Hon. T. Jackson seconded the motion and said: "I, the Chamber of Commerce, we moved the amendment rather hastily; and several persons interested have since consulted me about it; and I think the views of the Chamber and the community generally will be met by making the amendment."

The Colonial Treasurer said another very excellent amendment on the somewhat complicated tariff had been suggested. It was proposed, and is entirely agreed with it, that a Charter Party, or any agreement for the charter of a ship, or of hiring of any seagoing ship or vessel, should be calculated on the estimated freight; 10 cents for every \$100 or part thereof.

The Hon. P. Ryrie seconded. He said he thought the charges that proposed would have practical effect hardly on short voyages. By the new rule an ad valorem duty would be charged on the earnings. Under the old rates a vessel going to Saigon would have to pay the same as a vessel going to London.

With reference to the proposed duty on Chinese Loan Association Books, the Chief Justice said:—If it is necessary to pay a charge upon these association books I would suggest that it would be advisable not to stamp them. I would suggest that they should be required to be registered. Those of us who have had any dealings with the association know what great trouble these Chinese Loan Association Books give. That some of the associations are managed honestly and honourably there can be no doubt; or there would not be so many of them in existence, but some of them, I believe, to be illegal, others of them I believe from the evidence I have had are mere pitfalls to entrap the unwary. If we put a stamp on these documents they will go forth and be published with this stamp on them as the recognition of their legality. The better course is to deal with them as they are to treat them as friendly societies and other such associations are treated in England, viz that they should be registered, their rules approved of, and that a security be taken that the prom-

oters will perform their agreement, and a small fee imposed. This I think might easily be done by the Registrar General's Office. I should therefore leave this out of the Stamp Act, and, if it is necessary, introduce some other measure.

The Colonial Treasurer said he had no objection to the withdrawal of the clause and this was done.

On the suggestion of the Chief Justice it was decided that cases under \$250 should be exempted from probate duty.

#### ORDINANCES PASSED.

The Post Office Ordinance, the ordinance dealing with the admission of attorneys to practice and the ordinance making ship masters, mates, and engineers' certificates granted here have the same force as those granted at home, were read a third time and finally passed.

#### NON OFFICIAL JUSTICES NOT TO VOTE AT NOMINATION OF MEMBERS TO THE COUNCIL.

The Attorney General moved the following motion:—"That it is expedient that those Justices of the Peace, who are not official Justices of the Peace, should abstain from taking part in the nomination of any Member of this Council, who is to be nominated by the Justices of the Peace." In making his motion, he gave the reasons why he thought this motion should be adopted. The official Justices of the Peace, numbering 20, if they were allowed to vote, would have it in their power, to pronounce the choice of the election. Such a result would alter the balance of the Council, and it was not in their power, to pronounce the choice of the election. Such a result would alter the balance of the Council, and it was not in their power, to pronounce the choice of the election.

The Hon. P. Ryrie seconded. The Hon. F. D. Sassoon supported the motion.

His Excellency the Governor also spoke in favour of the motion. He supported the motion for the same reasons as those given by the Attorney General.

The motion was carried.

#### LAYING OF FOUNDATION STONE OF NEW CENTRAL SCHOOL.

His Excellency announced that this long contemplated and important work would be commenced on Saturday afternoon at five o'clock. He had been requested to lay the first stone, and he would be very much gratified by the attendance of each hon. member as might wish to attend.

#### ADJOURNMENT.

The Council was adjourned until Wednesday next, at four p.m.

#### BUFFET'S ANNUAL REGATTA.

The following is the programme for the Annual Regatta of 'The Buffs' to be held on Saturday, 26th April, 1884.

1st RACE.—N. O. Officers and Men under 2 years service. Course from McGregor to Wellington Barracks, 1st, 30 points, prize \$7; 2nd, 15 points, prize \$3.

2nd RACE.—Companies Championship Race, from Kellett Island to Wellington Barracks, to be rowed in Companies of 8 oared boats either with or without flags, 1st 50 points, prize \$15; 2nd 25 points, prize \$10; 3rd, 10 points, prize \$5.

3rd RACE.—Upon Race.—Open to all 5 and 6 oared gigs, course Kellett Island to Wellington Barracks, 1st prize \$10; 2nd, three or more boats start, 2nd prize \$7.

4th RACE.—Duffies Race.—Open to all men who have never pulled in the Companies best crews, to be picked by the Sergeant of another Company. Course McGregor to Wellington Barracks, 1st, 20 points, prize \$7; 2nd, 10 points, prize \$3.

5th RACE.—Non-Commissioned Officers Race.—To be rowed in their own companies boats. Course McGregor to Wellington Barracks, 1st, 30 points, prize \$7; 2nd, 15 points, prize \$3.

6th RACE.—Veterans Race.—For men over 10 years service.—Course McGregor to Wellington Barracks, 1st, 30 points, prize \$7; 2nd, 15 points, prize \$3.

7th RACE.—Officers v. N. O. Officers Race. Course McGregor to Wellington Barracks, officers prizes.

8th RACE.—Consolation Race.—Open to Regimental Bands, (no winning crew) course Kellett Island to Wellington Barracks, 1st, 20 points, prize \$7; 2nd, 10 points, prize \$3.

#### SUPREME COURT.

IN CRIMINAL SESSIONS.

(Before the Hon. James Russell, Puisne Judge.)

Wednesday, April 23.

Young Su Lim, the man who cut and wounded seven men with a razor in a house in Tang Hin Lane on the 28th ultimo, and was found guilty of the crime of maliciously wounding, was sentenced to imprisonment for eighteen months with hard labour. His Lordship said it had been clearly proved that no attempt had been made to rob him as he alleged, but as he had apparently committed the offence while labouring under a hallucination he would not impose a severe sentence.

#### IN ORIGINAL JURISDICTION.

(Before Sir G. Phillips, Chief Justice.)

Wednesday, April 23.

KWOK KAU AND OTHERS v. CHAN YE.—This summons was brought to recover a sum of over \$1,200 said to be due on interest on certain promissory notes. The plaintiffs in the main were business men carrying on business here, and the defendant was formerly a merchant in this Colony. Defendant carried on an extensive business of que tins, and in the course of his business, he borrowed from various banks in the Colony as much as \$350,000, giving promissory notes for the same. Finding he was unable to meet the interest accruing on these notes, he placed his affairs, at the request of his creditors, in the hands of four influential and respectable Chinese merchants in the Colony. These merchants succeeded in effecting an arrangement, and in accordance with this arrangement a partner concerned went to the office of Messrs Sharp, Toller and Johnson and had a mortgage deed prepared. His Lordship said it would have been much better and it would have saved the present litigation if they had made their agreement to writing. An agreement was made out at their request in

the office of Messrs Sharp, Toller and Johnson which recited no agreement whatsoever, but which was drawn out as if money had been advanced for five months at the time the mortgage was made out, the 26th June, 1883, whereas the money was advanced before any interest whatever upon the same advanced. The questions to be decided by His Lordship were whether or not the promissory notes produced bore interest; and whether or not the plaintiffs had agreed to give up all the interest which had accrued after the mortgage deed was made up. The notes produced were payable on demand, and contained no mention of interest; but one of the witnesses produced on the first day of the trial an envelope along with the promissory note mentioning the interest. This envelope bore the defendant's chop. Thereupon the plaintiffs went home and looking through their safe they came upon envelopes of a similar character. These bore the defendant's chop and purported to state the rate of interest from the date when date of payment was extended for five months. It was suggested by the defendant that these envelopes were forgeries, but His Lordship had had the chops, envelopes and writing examined, and so far as he could ascertain there appeared to be nothing suspicious with regard to them. Under the circumstances the defendant admitted that if he had obtained this money without interest he would have to be for a temporary period only; and he admitted that the money was a demand was made for payment. It was undoubtedly a fact that where a promissory note is made payable on demand without interest, interest runs from the date of the demand. The only question then was whether the mortgage was entered into. It was admitted on all hands that there was some discussion upon the subject. Some of the creditors wanted eight per cent. on the principal, but defendant was only willing to give five per cent. The parties agreed that the plaintiff's offer of five per cent. was accepted. Defendant admitted that he told all his creditors he was unable to pay interest, that the plaintiffs agreed to give up the interest and in token thereof gave up the promissory notes. Plaintiffs asked the plaintiff to be paid the interest, and the defendant admitted that he was unable to pay interest, that the plaintiffs agreed to give up the interest and in token thereof gave up the promissory notes. Plaintiffs asked the plaintiff to be paid the interest, and the defendant admitted that he was unable to pay interest, that the plaintiffs agreed to give up the interest and in token thereof gave up the promissory notes.

#### THE RUSSIAN ANNEXATION OF MERV.

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#### NEWS BY THE ENGLISH MAIL.

The P. & O. steamer *Arcturion* arrived here last night bringing London mails up to March 21st.

#### TELEGRAMS.

GREAT FIRE IN DUBLIN.—On Monday, April 13.—A great fire broke out yesterday in Falmouth Row and continued to rage for five hours, several houses being completely destroyed and many others damaged, resulting in enormous loss.

#### DEPARTURE OF GENERAL GRAHAM.

Cairo, April 3.—General Graham left Suakin to-day.

#### THE GOVERNMENT POLICY IN THE SUDAN.

London, April 3.—Lord Hartington, replying to a question in the House of Commons, said that it was not the intention of the Government to send troops to Berber and Khartoum; if General Gordon is in fact a detachment of General Wood's army would be sent to Suakin.

#### THE HOUSE OF COMMONS.

London, April 4.—In the House of Commons last night, Sir Stafford Northcote proposed the adjournment of the House, demanding an explicit statement of the policy of the Government in Egypt. Mr. Gladstone, in reply, vehemently complained of the unprecedented persistence of the Opposition, and denied that General Gordon's mission to Khartoum was a military one. He said that, on the contrary, there were favourable prospects of its being successful. The London press this morning criticizes the ministerial statement as being unsatisfactory.

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### Merchant Vessels in Hongkong Harbour.



PARCELS, CONTAINING NO LETTERS, but any parcel may be opened by direction of the Postmaster General. In the class of Parcels for India, a declaration of contents and value is required, a printed form for which is supplied gratis. The Registration of Parcels for India and Ceylon is compulsory.	Half Day	20	Sealed
	Half Day	20	
	Three Hours	12	
	One Hour	6	
	Half Hour	3	
	Nothing in the above Scale to be added for private agreements.		also

**Figure 1.** The effect of the number of trials on the mean accuracy of the responses. The error bars represent the standard error of the mean.

[illegible]

Name.	Flag and Rig.	Tonn.	Genl.	H.P.	Captain.	Where at.
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Albrook	Russian aviso	1034	8	800	Captain Schmidt	Hongkong
Alert	U. S. corvette	841	—	—	Commander C. F. Barclay	Shanghai
Orient-Occo Colombo	Italian corvette	5600	—	—	Captain Acciari	Shanghai
D'Estaing	French cruiser	2233	16	—	Captain Cokubrain	Hongkong
Duguay Trouin	French cruiser	3700	10	—	Captain Muro de Eguano	Shanghai
Enterprise	U. S. corvette	1372	6	—	Commander A. S. Barker	Canton
Essex	Russian transport	1623	—	50	Captain Schabert	Shanghai
Essex	U. S. corvette	1375	6	100	Commander A. H. McCormack	On a cruise
Gornostai	Russian gunboat	459	7	60	Commander Stark	Vladivostok
Hamelin	French cruiser	—	—	—	Commander Bonstun	Tongku
Ilia	German gunboat	429	4	340	Lieut. Commander Rogov	Hongkong
Jules	U. S. corvette	903	8	106	Commander J. L. Buchanan	Canton
Kearney	British ship	1112	—	375	Commander de Beaumont	Tientsin
La Galassione	French frigate	6703	—	—	Captain Tishchen	Amoy
Lepanto	Spanish transport	1207	2	—	D. Ramon Valentin Buenaplan	Hongkong
Letin	French gunboat	437	4	100	Captain Debes	Canton
Marques del Duero	Russian dispatch-veas	458	—	220	Captain A. S. Calderon	Tongku
Medway	British ship	1577	6	156	Commander J. C. Hargrave	On a cruise
Morgan	Russian gunboat	400	7	60	Commander Molotov	Vladivostok
Nayaznik	Russian corvette	1230	—	—	Captain Kaluzner	Shanghai
Nutilla	German gun vessel	716	4	600	Lieut. Commander Aachornborn	Canton
Nerpa	Russian gunboat	490	7	80	Commander Valabov	Vladivostok
Ozarkounk	Russian corvette	1401	—	50	Captain B. Grahmston	Yokohama
Edon	U. S. gunboat	300	6	600	Commander D. D. B. Ghidani	Shanghai
Richmond	U. S. frigate	2260	14	1000	Captain J. S. Skerrett	on route Singapore
Sokoloff	Russian corvette	2100	14	—	Captain Haasdruff	Chefoo
Rebel	Russian gunboat	400	7	80	Commander Boyce	Yokohama
Sinope	French corvette	3080	14	3500	Captain B. Grahmston	Shanghai
Tumoz	French transport	2428	—	—	Commander de la Vigne Catri	Amoy
Troisphane	French frigate	3174	14	2000	Captain Bani	Amoy
Velasco	Spanish corvette	1158	—	—	Captain Emilio Butron	Hongkong
Willara	French corvette	2406	15	675	Captain Dewar	Shanghai
Yalta	French corvette	1300	—	—	Captain Frenkel	Shanghai
Yalta	Russian gunboat	400	—	—	Commander Malachov	Vladivostok
Yukon	German gunboat	480	4	240	Lieut. Commander von Bayen	Hongkong

BAIRN, ALAN DAWSON, 108-109-110  
Wyndham Street, Hong Kong.